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A

STATEMENT OF FACTS,

&c. &c.



A

STATEMENT OF FACTS,

IN ANSWER TO

MRS. GUNNING'S LETTER,

ADDRESSED TO

HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF ARGYLL.

BY CAPTAIN BOWEN.

K

D U B L I N :

PRINTED FOR W. WILSON, P. WOGAN, P. BYRNE, H. COLBERT, W. PORTER, J. MOORE, J. JONES, A. GRUEBER.
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M. DCC. XCI.



LETTER

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL

BY CAPTAIN BOWEN

DUBLIN

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL
ST. JOHN'S WOOD
DUBLIN

INTRODUCTION.

I AM respectfully to solicit the attention of the Public, before whom I come under the hardest compulsion, having never aspired to become an author, much less to enter into a literary dispute with a Lady; but when, in violation of all female decorum, that Lady so far forgets herself as to villify and traduce me in the coarsest language, and to extend this outrage to one deservedly dear to me, whom I am bound, by the most solemn ties, to protect, when under pretence of asserting her daughter's innocence, she brings forward the grossest insinuations and calumnies in the most

public manner, and charges them on us, it becomes necessary to shew the injustice of the charge, by stating to the Public the transaction, as far as we are concerned; and though the criminality of her daughter be made apparent, the blame cannot be imputed to me; the imprudent conduct of the mother forces out the truth. My wish was, that it might have been concealed from the public eye, in compassion to the mother, as well as the daughter; and when I found an investigation could not be avoided, I meant to have done it by an appeal to the laws of my country, as the annexed opinion of Counsel will explain, which will also account for the necessity of this publication. The person *most* interested, from the noblest motives, abstains from all defence in *his own* cause; and it is obvious to remark, that the same motives which restrain him ought to stimulate me. His silence may, and doubtless would, on many accounts, be imputed to him as honour; the hardest constructions would

would, probably, be made on mine. The affidavits and documents are such as were laid before Counsel for legal advice; and though but a part were furnished by me, I avoid either selecting, or any ways altering the form of the statement. The facts, as stated, I shall leave to the discernment of the reader, without either argument or observation; nor will it be expected I should descend to reply to the vulgar and outrageous abuse of Mrs. Gunning's publication.

Convinced no person will think these documents wantonly brought forward, it only remains I should apologize to those very respectable Personages, whose names are unavoidably made use of---a liberty the exigence of the case alone can excuse.

ESSEX BOWEN.

April 10, 1791.

C A S E.

MR^S. GUNNING's Pamphlet is left herewith for your perusal, as also the copy of the paragraph in the Morning Post of 19th March 1791, containing an extract from the publication. Captain and Mrs. Bowen feel their characters so much called in question by the same, that they think it right to request your advice on the occasion. They are possessed of, and have in their power, ample materials (copies of which are now left for your perusal) to falsify every fact charged on them, or alluded to against them, in that publication, and fully to justify their own characters and conduct in the business.

Will it, therefore, be adviseable and proper for them to prosecute the author and publishers,

B

lishers, or either of them, criminally, or by action, and against whom would you advise such action or criminal prosecution; or in what other manner should Captain and Mrs. Bowen act so as to take off the impresson these publications may have made to their prejudice?

OPINION

O P I N I O N.

WE have read Mrs. Gunning's pamphlet which accompanied the Case, and find in it charges of a very serious nature against Captain and Mrs. Bowen : but persons are every now and then placed in situations so singular, that the wisest laws (which are directed to general objects are not always adequate to reach them.

The law does not authorise prosecutions or actions merely to assert character by establishing the falsehood of calumny, but as the means of recovering damages by the party injured, or criminally punishing the offenders against the public peace ; and the opinion of the world, therefore, is very much governed on such subjects by the amount of the damages given or the punishment inflicted. A very small part of the Public have leisure or ability to investigate the merits of the trial, and the general judgement is formed by the event.

In the present case, therefore, if Captain Bowen were to have recourse to law, and were to prevail, the event on the principle alluded to would rather mislead than undeceive the Public, because the punishment or damages would probably be very small. We put, indeed, punishment out of the question; for as his object is the vindication of his character, it would not be effected by a prosecution which shuts out the author or publisher from a justification founded on the truth of the publication. He could only, therefore, consistently with his views, which are very properly directed, commence an action for damages against the author, the printer, or both.

With regard to the first, every principle of honour and delicacy forbids an action against Mrs. Gunning, because the General himself must, by the forms of law, be made the Defendant with her, and what is more essential, would be responsible for the damages and costs recovered against her: besides Mrs. Gunning is (as it is reported) abroad, and out of the jurisdiction of the Court.

With regard to the printers, though they are, by the policy of the law, responsible for what they publish, yet, in estimating damages, that responsibility is generally measured by circumstances.

Where

Where a man maliciously, or even rashly, sends forth from a mercenary press unauthorized or anonymous slander, the wrong suffered, be it what it may, ought to lead to the measure of the damages : But where a printer, as in this case, in the fair course of his trade, only gives circulation to the narrative of a person of rank in the world, in the publicity of which, honour, and even personal safety, appear to be interested, which is beside sanctioned, with the solemnity of an oath. And with the truth or falsehood, of which the printer does not appear to have mixed himself by any act beyond the mere one of printing, a jury would undoubtedly distinguish between the malicious invention and the innocent mechanic. But there is a higher principle in our minds than the success of an action ; namely, the justice of it. And we do not, therefore, advise Captain Bowen to prosecute a suit which, to render at all useful to him, must be pushed to the effect of recovering heavy damages against a mere printer, to whom, in this particular instance, no malice is imputed.

Captain Bowen, in this particular situation, has no alternative but to rely on the insufficiency of the evidence brought forwards by Mrs. Gunning, or to state to the public the facts relating to himself which accompany the case, and which appear to us to be sufficient to bear out any legal proceeding,

ceeding, and extremely material and important for public consideration.

This, however, is a matter of discretion with himself, and not within our province to advise on; only, that if he pursues that course, we would suggest to him the propriety of a plain and simple communication of the facts, rather than a display of argument or composition, however much he may feel his mind affected by what has been written against him.

T. ERSKINE,
J. CAMPBELL,
JOHN TONBLANQUE.

April 7th, 1791.



STATE

STATE OF FACTS,

AS

LAID BEFORE COUNSEL.

MISS Elizabeth Gunning, the only child of General Gunning, and niece of the late Duchess of Argyll, aged twenty-one and upwards, from her family and connections was introduced to people of the first rank.

Reports had, in the course of last summer, been circulated, that a marriage was intended between the Marquis of Blandford, the eldest son of the Duke

Duke of Marlborough, and Miss Gunning, and several letters were said to have passed between the parties. Suspensions, however, having been entertained by General Gunning as to the truth and authenticity of these letters and correspondence, Miss Gunning, in justification of herself, wrote a narrative of what, as she alledged, had passed between her and the Marlborough family, particularly Lord Blandford.—On the idea that the facts stated in that narrative were true, General Gunning wrote a letter to the Duke of Marlborough, which he delivered, together with a packet enclosing Miss Gunning's narrative, to his own Groom on Thursday the 3d of February, 1791, in the forenoon, with orders to go with the same to the Duke of Marlborough's at Blenheim. The letter was in the following words :

ST. JAMES'S PLACE,
3d, Feb. 1791.

“ MY LORD,

“ I HAVE the honour of addressing this letter
 “ to your Grace, not with the smallest wish,
 “ after what has passed, of having a marriage
 “ established between Lord Blandford and my
 “ daughter, or of claiming any promise or pro-
 “ posal to that effect, but merely to know *whether*
 “ *ther* your Grace, or the Duchess of Marlbo-
 “ rough,



“ rough, have it in recollection that your
 “ Graces or Lord Blandford ever gave my
 “ daughter reason to think a marriage was once
 “ intended.

“ My motive for giving this trouble arises
 “ merely from a desire of removing any im-
 “ putation from my daughter’s character, as
 “ if she had entertained an idea of such im-
 “ portance without any reasonable foundation.

“ For my own satisfaction, and that of my
 “ most particular friends, who had been in-
 “ duced to believe the reports of an intend-
 “ ed marriage, I have desired my daughter
 “ to draw up an accurate narrative of every
 “ material circumstance on which that belief
 “ was founded.

“ This narrative I have the honour of trans-
 “ mitting to your Grace for your own peru-
 “ sal, and that of the Duchess of Marlbo-
 “ rough and Lord Blandford, thinking it high-
 “ ly suitable that you should have an early
 “ opportunity of examining it; and I beg leave
 “ to request your Grace will, after examinati-
 “ on, correct or alter such passages as may ap-
 “ pear either to your Grace, the Duchess of
 “ Marlborough,

“ Marlborough, or Lord Blandford, to be erroneously stated.

“ I have the honour to be,

“ With the greatest respect,

“ My LORD,

“ Your Grace’s

“ Most humble and

“ Most obedient Servant,

“ JOHN GUNNING.”

On the 4th of February the Groom delivered to General Gunning’s Valet a letter, the cover directed, “ General Gunning, St. James Place London, Feb. 3d ;” which cover appeared to be sealed with the Duke of Marlborough’s arms.—The letter was in the following words :

[A]

“ BLENHEIM.

“ SIR,

“ I TAKE the earliest opportunity to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, and to answer it with that explicitness you are so much entitled to. From the first of the acquaintance of D——s of Marlborough and myself *had* with Miss Gunning, we were charmed with her, and it was with infinite satisfaction we discovered *Blandford*’s sentiments similar to our own. It had been long the wish of both to
“ see

“ see him married to some amiable woman—your
 “ daughter was the person we had fixed on, and
 “ we had every reason to suppose the object of his
 “ tenderest affections, and, from the conduct of
 “ both himself and his family, yourself and Miss
 “ Gunning had undoubtedly *every right* to look
 “ on a marriage as certain—indeed when I left
 “ town last summer I regarded her as my future
 “ daughter, and I must say it is with sorrow I re-
 “ linquish the idea.—The actions of young men
 “ are not always to be accounted for ; and it is
 “ with regret I acknowledge my son has been
 “ particularly unaccountable in his.—I beg you
 “ will do me the justice to believe that I shall ever
 “ think myself your debtor, for the manner in
 “ which you have conducted yourself in this af-
 “ fair, and that I must always take an interest in
 “ the happiness of Miss Gunning—I beg, if she
 “ has not conceived a disgust for the whole of my
 “ family, she will accept the sincerest good wishes
 “ of the Dukes and my daughters.

“ I have the honour to remain,

“ SIR,

“ Your much obliged and

“ Most obedient, humble Servant,

“ MARLBOROUGH.”

“ General Gunning.”

On

On the receipt of this letter General Gunning was much pleased, and immediately went to the Duke of Argyll's with it, and shewed it to the Duke; but very soon after General Gunning was convinced he had been abused, and that the letter above stated, which he supposed came from the Duke of Marlborough, was forged.

What first induced a suspicion that this letter of the 3d of February was a forgery, was, that the word Blandford was spelt *Blanford*; that the wax with which it was sealed was black, though the letter was wrote on gilt paper; and the envelope was a different hand to the letter itself.

About five in the afternoon of Tuesday the 8th of February, in the forenoon of which day General Gunning had seen Lord Henry Spencer, the General received a note from Mrs. Bowen, expressing her wish to see him that evening, but not to let any other part of his family know of it.

It may be proper to state, previous to mentioning the conversation between General Gunning and Captain and Mrs. Bowen, at this interview, what had passed between Mrs. and Miss Gunning, and Captain and Mrs. Bowen.

On or about the 20th of January Mrs. Gunning informed Captain and Mrs. Bowen, that her daughter's

daughter's match with Lord Blandford was at length settled, and would very shortly take place—that the marriage settlements were signed—Mrs. Gunning mentioned the Trustees on Miss Gunning's part, and many other circumstances—the wedding clothes, jewels, &c.—When Mrs. Gunning mentioned these circumstances to Mrs. Bowen, she was very pressing with her to spend as much time as she could at St. James's Place, as it was improper her daughter should go out till her marriage took place; that they (General Gunning's family) were in daily expectation of the arrival of Lord Blandford in town; but that Mrs. Gunning dreaded the effects of Lord Lorne's disappointment (who had likewise, as she said, paid his addresses to Miss Gunning) and that Mrs. Gunning apprehended her daughter's marriage with Lord Blandford would drive Lord Lorne to some act of desperation.

Both Captain and Mrs. Bowen (then respecting Mrs. Gunning as a person of strict honour and veracity) had not the least doubt but that a marriage between Lord Blandford and Miss Gunning was to take place—till Tuesday the 1st of February, Mrs. Bowen received the following letter from Miss Gunning, stated in the pamphlet, a copy of which was sent Mrs. Gunning with the affidavits.

8 o'Clock,

(B)

8 o'Clock, Tuesday.

“ You will, my dear Mrs. Bowing, be sur-
 “ prized at receiving a note from me so early ;
 “ but when I tell you my motive, you will, I
 “ am sure, intercede with Mr. Bowing to par-
 “ don the liberty I am going to take, and grant
 “ my request. I will tell you, in a very few
 “ words, the situation I have for some time been
 “ in. Mama, wedded to Lord Blandford, thought
 “ every thing he did right, while I was merely
 “ a cypher in the whole affair ; and indeed, to
 “ tell you the truth, that was the only light I
 “ wished to be considered in ; For though I ac-
 “ knowledged him to be very amiable, my heart
 “ refused him any share in it, as it has long
 “ been devoted to another. Within this week
 “ I have gained papa so far of my side, as to re-
 “ present to him that I was displeased with the
 “ conduct of Lord B. ; and as he has a natural af-
 “ fection for the person interested in my applica-
 “ tion, he the more readily joined me, and three
 “ days ago wrote, at my positive request, to the
 “ Duke of Marlborough to tell him that I was
 “ not satisfied with Lord B., and in the most
 “ handsome manner wished to break off all fur-
 “ ther connection.—The Duke of M. wrote a
 “ letter

“ letter, which he received yesterday, and of
 “ which I inclose you the copy, and beg you will
 “ have the goodness to ask Mr. Bowing to write
 “ it off fair for me, as I wrote it from memory,
 “ and wish to send it to a friend of mine this
 “ evening by the post. Pray tell him my story,
 “ but save me as much as you can. If I could
 “ present Lord Lorne to you, he would be an
 “ apology for every thing I have done. Neither
 “ papa or I have courage to tell mama this for
 “ she detests the person dearest to me on earth.
 “ I am sure I may depend on your not telling
 “ her any part of this letter.—I should have
 “ spoken to you last night, but I found I had
 “ not courage. Do not send any note or message
 “ to this house about the contents of this letter :
 “ I will send to you about two o’clock for the
 “ copy I hope Mr. Bowing will have the goodness
 “ to send me. I would call, but that I am to be
 “ all the morning at Argyle House. I write in
 “ such a hurry I do not believe you will be able
 “ to read this.

“ Ever yours affectionately,

“ E. GUNNING.”

In the cover inclosed with that letter was a
 written paper, purporting to be a letter from the
 Duke of M. to General Gunning (being the letter
 marked

marked A) see page 4. Mrs. Bowen does not recollect ever having received any letter or note from Miss Gunning before, nor had she ever spoken with *her* on the subject of the supposed marriage.*—On receiving the letter on Tuesday, Captain and Mrs. Bowen took it for granted that Miss Gunning really had declined the addresses of Lord Blandford for Lord Lorne's sake, and that the General and his daughter had their reasons for not letting Mrs. Gunning know it.—They (Captain and Mrs. B.) had no communication with any of the parties but the General's family; and though they were frequently at General Gunning's house, they very seldom saw him, he being often engaged out. Indeed Captain Bowen never had spoken to the General on the subject of Miss Gunning's marriage.—Mrs. Bowen had once, in the month of November†, when she was to pay
General

* Miss Gunning in conversation with Mrs. Bowen some days after, expressed the obligation to Captain Bowen for having copied the letter for her on Tuesday; and on *Saturday* she informed Mrs. Bowen she had another letter that her father had since received from the Duke of Marlborough, which she meant to request Captain Bowen to copy for her.

† The first conversation Mrs. Bowen ever had with any part of General Gunning's family on the subject of Miss Gunning's match, was in the month of November, when on a visit at St. James's Place. Mrs. Bowen having expressed to Mrs. Gunning that she hoped the account she had read in the papers, announcing a marriage between Lord B. and Miss G. was true. Mrs. G. answered, "it was very true;" and that they
(General

General Gunning's family a visit from Kensington, mentioned the report respecting Lord Blandford and Miss Gunning's marriage, which the General did not contradict.

Mrs. Gunning constantly expressing a vast deal of anxiety for Lord Blandford's arrival, and likewise very great apprehensions for the consequences of his Lordship's and Lord Lorne's meeting, on Saturday the 5th Mrs. Bowen was induced to attempt to undeceive her as to the state of her daughter's affections, not entertaining a doubt of the truth of Miss Gunning's letter, and therefore mentioned to Mrs. Gunning the contents of that letter. But Mrs. Bowen wishing not to appear to betray the confidence Miss Gunning had reposed in her, she desired Mrs. Gunning to tell her daughter that she (Mrs. B.) had dropt the letter by accident from her pocket, and that Mrs. Gunning had picked it up, and knowing the handwriting, had read it; Mrs. Bowen not having the letter about her, Mrs. Gunning said she would call on her the next day for it. Early the next morning (the 6th of February) Mrs. Bowen received the following note from Miss Gunning:

(General Gunning's family) had been wished joy on the occasion some months before by the whole town; and in the course of the same day, when Mrs. B. congratulated General G. on the prospect of his daughter's making so great a match, the General did not contradict the report.

C

" Dear

“ Dear Mrs. Bowing,—I am sure nothing but
 “ having been very much frightened last night
 “ could have made you betray a confidence re-
 “ posed in you; indeed you had almost killed me;
 “ and nothing, I am convinced, but a denial on
 “ my part, could have saved mama from instantly
 “ leaving the house. She now thinks you have
 “ been imposed on by forgery, and means to call
 “ on you to go out an airing with us; and at the
 “ same time she wants you to shew her my letter,
 “ but for God’s sake, do not.—If you have the
 “ smallest consideration—burn it—it is for her
 “ own sake I request this, as it is only her own
 “ peace I consult in not instantly owning every
 “ thing—but in future I am determined to have
 “ no will but her’s trusting to *your honour* in not
 “ mentioning this note.

“ I remain, dear Mrs. Bowing,

“ Affectionately your’s,

“ E. GUNNING.”

“ Mama at first told me that she had picked
 “ up my letter to you, which you had dropped,
 “ but after owned you had desired her to say so;
 “ but that you began to tell her, without any such
 “ thing, *and desired her to say* she had requested
 “ you to leave the house.—Do write me a word
 “ to

“ to say you did not mean to deceive me and make mischief.”

On the outside of the letter, of which the above is a copy, was written as follows :

“ I would not have papa told what passed last night for the world, as he would never again see mama, or any body that had told her.—I trust this letter to you and Mr. Bowning’s honour.”

And about twelve o’clock Miss Gunning herself called on Mrs. Bowen, and said she had come unknown to her mother. Miss Gunning desired that Mrs. Bowen would destroy the letters she had sent her: and requesting pen, ink, and paper, wrote two notes or letters*.

C 2

Gun-

* The following are supposed to be the two notes, or letters taken from Mrs. Gunning’s pamphlet :

Tuesday

“ Dear Mrs. Bowen,

“ As you seem to be in the confidence of Mama, I think it right to tell you that you may hint to her that my affections are engaged to my C——n L——d L——, and that I am not to be married to L——d B——, as she seems to think; will you be so good, to get the enclosed copied for me?

“ Affectionately yours,

(Signed) “ E. Gunning.”

“ Sir,

Gunning wrote them in a hand (as she expressed it herself), so unlike her own, that her mother must take them for forgeries: with which she said Mrs. Bowen had been deceived.—Miss Gunning gave as a reason for what she did, that if her mother was undeceived, in respect to her attachment to *Lord Lorne*, to use her own words, “it would produce such a rumpus in the family,” that it would be the means of separating her father and mother. Mrs. Bowen was induced, from those considerations, to comply so far with Miss Gunning’s request as to enclose these notes, or letters, apologizing for not seeing Mrs. Gunning when she called, in order to avoid any farther explanation; but fortunately Mrs. Bowen did not comply with the whole of Miss Gunning’s request of burning the letters, which Miss Gunning had made a point of with Mrs. Bowen on quitting her on Sunday. Some inconsistencies in the conduct of Miss Gunning when she called, and hearing in the course of Sunday and Monday, that reports prevailed in the

“ Sir,

“ I must say I wish you and your daughter had known
“ your own minds sooner in respect to my son.

“ I am your most

“ Obedient,

Signed at length _____
but the name misspelt.

world

world that Mrs. and Miss Gunning were suspected of carrying on a fictitious correspondence, Mr. and Mrs. Bowen thought it proper to request to see General Gunning; and for that purpose, on Tuesday the 8th of February, Mrs. Bowen wrote a note to the General as before mentioned*.

About seven o'clock that evening General Gunning went to Mr. Bowen's—Captain and Mrs. Bowen were at home. After the usual compliments, Captain Bowen asked General Gunning if he had received a letter from the Duke of Marlborough? to which the General answered he had. Captain Bowen then produced a paper, asking General Gunning if the contents were any thing like the letter he had received from the Duke of Marlborough? On reading over the same, General Gunning expressed great surprise, and said it seemed to him to be exactly the same; but luckily he had the Duke's letter in his pocket, which he immediately produced. On seeing the envelope, Captain Bowen did not express any surprise; but, upon opening the letter, he immediately said that he wrote that very letter as a copy, which he had sent to Miss Gunning, and observed, he had written the word "Copy" at the top, and the word "Signed" opposite the signature, and that if General Gunning would hold it up to the light, erasures must appear—which were evident,

* So far Captain Bowen's narrative.

and will be hereafter mentioned * : and Captain Bowen shewed to General Gunning Miss Gunning's letter received by Mrs. Bowen on the Tuesday before, and likewise gave into his possession the two other letters Mrs. Bowen had received from his daughter, which General Gunning was satisfied were his daughter's writing †.

General Gunning thought it proper to examine the Groom whom he had sent to Blenheim, who

Vide page 29.

† Captain Bowen having since thought it necessary to request General Gunning would express his sentiments as to the handwriting, received the following letter :

" No. 13, Norton Street,
" 11th April, 1791.

" S I R,

" I DECLARE that the letters you shewed me on Tuesday
" evening the 8th of February, as written by my daughter,
" which letters are stated in the Case which was laid before
" Counsel, I did then, and do now, believe were written by
" my daughter.

" I am, S I R,

" Your most obedient and

" Most humble Servant,

" J. GUNNING."

" Captain Bowen."

confessed

confessed what was afterwards sworn to in his affidavit*, to which the reader is referred.

Having now evidence beyond the possibility of a doubt, General Gunning, on the morning of the 9th of February, had a conversation with Miss Minifie nearly to the effect mentioned in the pamphlet†, with the addition, that the General said

* See the affidavit of Wm. Pearce.

† “ Wednesday, Feb. 9, General Gunning called me into
 “ his dressing-room; I was at the time going to him, to tell him
 “ that Miss Gunning had been ill the evening before, and that
 “ Dr. H—— had been with her at the Duchess of
 “ B——’s request, which, before he spoke to me, I informed
 “ him of; but how was I shocked to hear him say that he was
 “ not in the least surprised at it, as she had such a load of guilt
 “ on her mind: that she had forged a letter from the D——
 “ of ——, and also those supposed to have been written by
 “ Lord B——; that she prevented his (General Gunning’s)
 “ groom from going to B——m, and had given him the letters
 “ which he was to say he had brought from the D——
 “ of ——, I asked him how it was possible for her to
 “ get the seals of the D—— of ——, and of L——d
 “ B——? His answer was, she had seals of all kinds; and
 “ that she had been at Capt. Bowen’s lodgings, on Sunday
 “ morning the 6th, before they gave up the two letters to Mrs.
 “ Gunning. I told him those letters were not written in Miss
 “ Gunning’s hand. His reply was, she could write all sorts of
 “ hands.—I then told him that I had an anonymous letter
 “ yesterday morning. He said he knew that I had had one, and
 “ that it came from Capt. Bowen; which letter, my Lord,
 “ Mrs. Gunning has inserted. He said, if I would take her
 “ keys, I should find in her box the copies of those very let-
 ters:

said that the groom had informed him of the truth; to which Miss Minifie answered. "Miss Gunning was determined to defend herself by oath." The General said, if so, she could not think of staying in his house.

"ters: that he did not like to speak to Mrs. Gunning upon the subject, as they were on bad terms. I did go up as he desired me. Shocked to be sure she was at the falsehoods her father had alledged against her; but conscious innocence did not suffer her to be discomposed. She gave me her keys, and I opened her box, in which there were no paper or letters but such as came from your Grace's family.—I went again to General Gunning, and told him there were no such copies as he mentioned. Then, said he, she must have burnt them.—I told him she was as innocent as an Angel, and that she was determined to vindicate herself. His reply was, that she would then be ruined for ever; for that if she did, the D— of ——— would prosecute her, and lay her in prison for life—that the only thing she had to do was, to go into the country, or leave England. I replied, she would do neither; that she was determined to clear her innocence.—He said that was impossible, and bid me watch her, for otherwise, as soon as she felt the weight of her guilt, she would destroy herself.—I had not patience to hear more, and left the room.

"About an hour afterwards the General went out in the coach; and in another hour he stopped again at the door in his carriage, and sent up for me. He then beckoned me to come into the coach, which I did. Tell my daughter, said he, not to go to Argyll House, for if she attempts it, she will not be let in. He again told me she must go into the country or leave England; and I again repeated she would do neither."

Thus

Thus convinced of the forgery, and the author, General Gunning, by the advice of his friends, wrote to the Duke of Marlborough the following letter :

“ London, 11th Feb. 1791.

“ MY LORD,

“ I BEG leave to enclose to your Grace the copy
“ of a letter which I had the honour to address
“ you on the 3d instant, and which I never
“ doubted was to reach your hands safely, hav-
“ ing been delivered to one of my own servants,
“ who was ordered to proceed with it directly to
“ Blenheim. The servant returned to London
“ on the evening of the 4th, pretending he had
“ delivered my packet at Blenheim the preceding
“ evening, and brought to me a letter, which,
“ from the subscription, had the appearance of
“ an answer from your Grace, and the contents
“ were as favourable as could be wished for the
“ vindication of my daughter's character upon
“ the points stated in my letter to your Grace
“ of the 3d instant.

“ On the receipt of that letter, I was on the
“ point of setting out for Blenheim, to make
“ my acknowledgements to your Grace for the
“ very liberal and explicit manner in which your
“ sentiments have been conveyed to me by that
“ letter, which I took occasion to shew to the
“ Duke of Argyll, and some other particular
“ friends,

“ friends, who were anxious to get at the bottom
 “ of the whole of this business, for the sake of
 “ discovering the truth, in preference to every
 “ other consideration.

“ It occurred to us, however, that, before
 “ waiting on your grace for the above purpose, I
 “ ought to take every proper means of ascertaining
 “ the fact, whether that letter, received in answer to
 “ mine, was truly from your Grace, because
 “ there had been reason to suspect the authenticity
 “ of some letters which, in the months of Sep-
 “ tember, November, and January last, had been
 “ brought to me with the apparent subscriptions
 “ of Lord Blandford.

“ Having learnt that Lord Henry Spencer was
 “ in town. we thought that in your Grace’s ab-
 “ sence the most proper and natural manner of
 “ attaining certainty on this point was by apply-
 “ ing to his Lordship to know whether, from the
 “ handwriting, subscription, and contents, he
 “ believed that letter to be a genuine one from
 “ your Grace.

“ Nothing could exceed my surprise when I
 “ learnt from Lord Henry, after an attentive pe-
 “ rusal of the letter, that he was fully persuaded
 “ it was not a genuine, but a fabricated letter.

“ This discovery has led to the investigation of
 “ other matters, the result of which has brought
 to

“ to light a very extraordinary scene of com-
 “ plicated deceptions, such as leave no room to
 “ doubt, that, during the period while the re-
 “ ports were circulated of an intended marriage
 “ between Lord Blandford and my daughter,
 “ much unjustifiable artifice, deception, and fa-
 “ brication of letters, has been practised for the
 “ purpose of deceiving and misleading me and
 “ my relations of the Duke of Argyll’s family,
 “ in order to persuade us that both your Grace
 “ and the Duchess of Marlborough, and Lord
 “ Blandford, had, from declarations and con-
 “ duct, given my daughter strong reason to be-
 “ lieve that a marriage was once seriously in-
 “ tended between Lord Blandford and her.

“ The investigation lately made has afforded
 “ the strongest conviction to me, as well as to
 “ the Duke of Argyll and his family, that no
 “ degree of blame can, with any colour of jus-
 “ tice, be imputed to any of your Grace’s family,
 “ for any thing that has passed during the whole
 “ of this unfortunate business. I wish to God it
 “ were in my power to say, with equal certainty,
 “ that no blame was imputable to any of my fa-
 “ mily. It is with deep regret that I perceive
 “ the blame which must inevitably fall upon my
 “ infatuated daughter, whose conduct has been
 “ equally unaccountable and unjustifiable.

“ If, from the deceptions practised on me by
 “ my daughter, sentiments prejudicial to the
 “ character

“ character or conduct of any of your Grace’s
 “ family, have been at any time entertained on
 “ my part, the best atonement that can now be
 “ made is by taking this early opportunity of dis-
 “ closing to your Grace the result of the inves-
 “ tigation lately made.

“ I am extremely sorry that the repose of your
 “ Grace’s family should have suffered any tempo-
 “ rary disturbance either from the conduct of any
 “ of my family, or from the reports circulated
 “ about an intended marriage between Lord
 “ Blandford and my daughter. It has, there-
 “ fore, appeared to me a satisfaction due to your
 “ Grace and your family, that, after attaining
 “ the knowledge of the truth, I should lose no
 “ time in thus conveying to your Grace the
 “ strong and real impression which the true state
 “ of facts lately discovered has made upon me,
 “ as well as upon the Duke of Argyll and his
 “ family, and the other particular friends who
 “ have been so good to assist me in the progress
 “ of our late researches for discovering the truth.

“ I have the honour to be,

“ With the greatest respect,

“ My LORD,

“ Your Grace’s

“ Most faithful and

“ Obedient Servant,

“ JOHN GUNNING.”

“ His Grace the
 “ Duke of Marlborough.”

This

This letter produced the following answer :

“ Sir, Hill,

“ Feb. 12, 1791.”

“ S I R,

“ I take the earliest opportunity to thank you
 “ for your letter of the 11th of February,
 “ which I have just now received, and I must
 “ assure you at the same time, that your letter of
 “ February 3, of which you enclose me a copy,
 “ was never received by me ; nor did I ever write
 “ to you ; so that the letter you shewed my son
 “ Henry, must have been a forgery. I am
 “ heartily sorry for the uneasiness you have felt
 “ on this business, and can only say that I really
 “ believe there never was any foundation for the
 “ reports you allude to.

“ I am, SIR,

“ With great truth,

“ Your most obedient

“ Humble Servant,

“ MARLBOROUGH.”

The business being in this state, Mrs. and Miss Gunning having left the General's house, the same became the public conversation of the town. Paragraphs were inserted in newspapers, and Mrs. Gunning having threatened to publish a letter to the Duke of Argyll on the subject, it was thought right that steps should be taken to undeceive Mrs. Gunning, who *appeared* to be ignorant of her daughter's conduct, and thereupon all the persons whom it was supposed could explain or throw a light on the matter, were examined and they made the following affidavits, copies whereof were sent to Mrs. Gunning, which, it was hoped, would have put a stop to any farther publications; she has, however, published the letter herewith left. *

* Mrs. Gunning's pamphlet, laid before Counsel.

MARY

MARY CRANE'S AFFIDAVIT.

Middlesex to Wit.

MARY CRANE, servant to Captain Bowen, maketh oath, and faith, that on or about Tuesday the 1st day of February instant, John (a servant to Miss Gunning of St. James's Place) delivered, at Captain Bowen's lodging's at No. 23, Queen-street, May Fair, a packet which he desired might be given to Mrs. Bowen, saying, that *no* answer should be sent for—"That Miss Gunning" "would either call herself on Mrs. Bowen, or" "that the said John would come in the course" "of the day for an answer." And this deponent further saith, that on her return from chapel, on Sunday the 6th of February, she heard the voice of a lady on the stairs—That the said lady was then going down the said stairs—And on her observing to her said mistress (Mrs. Bowen) afterwards that she thought she had heard a lady's voice—her said mistress replied, "Yes, it" "was Miss Gunning's."

Sworn before me this
17th day of Feb.
1791,

Mark of

MARY CRANE.

W. ADDINGTON.

FRANCOIS

FRANCOIS LUGRIN's AFFIDAVIT.

Middlesex to Wit.

FRANCOIS LUGRIN dernièrement domestique chez Monsieur le Capitaine Bowen, fait ferment que Dimanche dernier huit jours, le six de Fevrier inst. il laissa entrer chez Capitaine Bowen (à numero 23, Queen Street, May Fair) Mademoiselle Gunning de Saint James's Place (laquelle Mademoiselle il connoit de vûe) et apres y avoir rester environ trois quarts d'heure, il la laissa sortir. Madlle Gunning y arriva & en sortit en chaise à porteurs, qui l'attendoit dans la rue prochaine.

FRANCOIS LUGRIN,

Sworn before me this

17th day of Feb.

1791,

W. ADDINGTON.

Translation

*Translation of FRANCIS LUGRIN's Affidavit.**Middlesex to Wit.*

FRANCIS LUGRIN, late servant to Capt. Bowen, maketh oath and faith, that last Sunday se'nnight, the 6th of February instant, he the deponent let into Captain Bowen's lodgings (at No. 23, Queen Street, May Fair) Miss Gunning of St. James's Place, which lady he knows by sight; and the said Miss Gunning having remained about three quarters of an hour at his master's, he the deponent let her out.

The said Miss Gunning both came and went away in a chair, which waited for her in the adjoining street.

FRANCIS LUGRIN.

Sworn before me this
17th day of Feb.
1791,

W. ADDINGTON.

D

MR.

MR. AND MRS. BOWEN'S AFFIDAVIT *.

Middlesex to Wit.

ESSEX BOWEN, Esquire, and LISETTA his wife, make oath and say, that Miss Gunning of St. James's Place, came to their lodgings at No. 23, Queen Street, May Fair, on Sunday, the 6th day of February instant, when the said Miss Gunning wrote two letters †, which she requested might be shewn to Mrs. Gunning, her mother; and that the said letters were inclosed and delivered to Mrs. Gunning the same day when she called on Mrs. Bowen.

LISETTA BOWEN.

ESSEX BOWEN.

Sworn before me this

17th day of Feb.

1791.

W. ADDINGTON.

* This and the following affidavit were made by Mr. and Mrs. Bowen, not for the purpose of being produced as evidence in their own cause, but to contribute, with others, to undeceive Mrs. Gunning.

† These are supposed to be the two letters which Mrs. Gunning states, pages 50 and 51. Vide p. 12, 13.

MR.

MR. BOWEN'S AFFIDAVIT.

ESSEX BOWEN, of Queen Street, May Fair, Esquire, maketh oath and faith, that on Tuesday, the 1st day of February instant, Mrs. Bowen, this deponent's wife, gave to this deponent the note or letter now produced and shewn to this deponent at the time of swearing this his affidavit, *marked with the letter B.**, and which this deponent, from the signature—E. Gunning concluded to come from Miss Gunning, the daughter of General Gunning. And this deponent further faith, that, together with the said note or letter, was inclosed under a cover, directed to Mrs. Bowen a paper writing, purporting to be a letter from his Grace the Duke of Marlborough to General Gunning; and which paper writing this deponent, in compliance with the request expressed in the said note or letter marked (B), did faithfully copy and transcribe. And this deponent further faith, that the said paper writing, purporting to be a letter from the said Duke of Marlborough to General Gunning as aforesaid, together with the said copy thereof so made by this deponent, were inclosed in a cover, and directed to the said Miss Gunning: and which this deponent understood and believes was afterwards given to a ser-

* Miss Gunning's first letter to Mrs. Bowen, received the first of February. See p. 7.

vant, or other person, who called for the same, as coming from the said Miss Gunning. And this deponent further saith, that on Sunday, the 6th day of February instant, he was given to understand that suspicions were entertained as to the authenticity of the correspondence which had been represented to have taken place between the Duke of Marlborough, the Marquis of Blandford his son, and the said Miss Gunning, and her father General Gunning.—Upon this intimation, this deponent requested General Gunning to call on this deponent, which the said General Gunning did on Tuesday, the 8th day of February instant; at which meeting this deponent put into the hands of General Gunning a copy of the aforesaid paper writing, purporting to be a letter from the Duke of Marlborough, to give General Gunning as aforesaid; which copy had been taken or made by the said Mrs. Bowen from that enclosed, and sent with the aforesaid note or letter marked B.—And this deponent further saith at the same time, he this deponent, or the said Mrs. Bowen, produced to General Gunning, the said note or letter marked (B) as the note or letter in which the said paper writing was inclosed under a cover directed to Mrs. Bowen as aforesaid. And this deponent further saith, that the said General Gunning discovered much surprize at this deponent's having in his possession a copy of the aforesaid paper writing or letter, which the said General Gunning considered himself to have received

received from the Duke of Marlborough, in answer to one which he, the said General, mentioned that he had written to the Duke. But this deponent saith, that at such time, the said General Gunning did not express, nor as this deponent believes, does the said General Gunning now entertain, any doubt respecting the note or letter marked (B), and then produced to him, the said General Gunning, being of the handwriting of his said daughter Miss Gunning. And this deponent further saith, that at such meeting, the said General Gunning took out of his pocket the paper or letter now produced, and shewn to this deponent at the time of swearing this his affidavit, and marked with the letter (A)*, as a letter received by him from the Duke of Marlborough on the preceding Friday; but which, upon being shewn to this deponent, proved to be the copy which this deponent had made of the aforesaid paper-writing, purporting as aforesaid, to be a letter from the said Duke of Marlborough to the said General Gunning, except that in making the said copy, this deponent had written the word "copy" at the top, and the word "signed" opposite the signature Marlborough, which said words "copy" "signed," do not now appear on the said copy, the said words having been erased since the said copy was wrote and sent as aforesaid. And this deponent further

* Vide page 5.

saith,

faith, that the said paper or letter marked (A) is the same paper or letter which was produced by him, the said General Gunning to this deponent and his said wife, as herein before mentioned. And this deponent further saith, that although his Grace the Duke of Argyll, Lord Frederick Campbell, the Right Honourable General Conway, Andrew Stuart, Esquire, and the aforesaid General Gunning, to whom the foregoing facts have been stated by this deponent, are fully satisfied of the truth of such this deponent's statement; yet this deponent, anxious to relieve the feelings of General Gunning, and in the hope that Mrs. Gunning and her daughter, the aforesaid Miss Gunning, may be brought to a right sense of the serious consequences which may result from a public investigation of the reports which have gone abroad, is induced to make this affidavit.

ESSEX BOWEN.

Sworn at the Public-
office in Symonds-
Inn, the 24th day of
February 1791, be-
fore

E. LEEDS.

AFFIDAVIT

AFFIDAVIT OF WILLIAM PEARCE.

WILLIAM PEARCE, groom to General Gunning, aged fifty, or thereabouts, maketh oath and faith that a packet and a letter were delivered to him by General Gunning, on the morning of the day on which he was directed by General Gunning to go to the Duke of Marlborough's, and that he was directed to carry them to the Duke of Marlborough's at Blenheim; that immediately after the packet and letter had been so delivered to this deponent by General Gunning, Hannah Hales, who was at that time Miss Gunning's maid, came to this deponent, and requested him to go to Miss Gunning; that he accordingly went to Miss Gunning, who was then in her bed-chamber; that it was about 10 o'clock in the morning; that Miss Gunning met this deponent at the door of her room, and said you are going to the Duke of Marlborough's.—That this deponent answered, yes.—That then Miss Gunning said to this deponent, you must not go; that this deponent answered and said, Miss Gunning, it is a matter of trust—I must perform my trust—upon which Miss Gunning said, I would not have you go for five thousand pounds: And that she insisted upon his not going, time after time, and said, that the business he was going upon was concerning a letter, which she had had two or three days—And that she knew what the

1

paper

paper was which he had from her papa, and that it was of her own hand writing. And this deponent saith, that Miss Gunning desired him to leave the papers which had been delivered to him by General Gunning with her, which she many times insisted on. And this deponent saith, he went down stairs and brought the papers which he had received from General Gunning, and delivered them into Miss Gunning's own hand.—

That when the witness had delivered the papers which he had received from General Gunning, to Miss Gunning, she delivered to him a letter, which she said was a letter from the Duke of Marlborough, and which she told this deponent she had opened and sealed it again, with the Duke of Marlborough's arms.—And this deponent saith, that he hath looked at the papers now produced, and shewn to him this deponent, at the time of swearing this his affidavit, marked with the letter (A) being the cover of a letter; and that these words and figure “ General Gunning
“ St. James Place, London, February 3d” wrote thereon, are, as this deponent verily believes, of the same hand-writing as the direction of the letter, which Miss Gunning delivered to him; and that this deponent particularly observed the day of the month written upon the said cover, and that he verily believes the said cover so shewn to him to be the same which was delivered to this deponent by the said Miss Gunning. And this deponent further saith, that Miss Gunning ordered

ed him to go out of town, and to stay such time as he thought he ought to take in going to and returning from the Duke of Marlborough's; and upon his return, to deliver the letter which she gave him to General Gunning. And this deponent farther saith, that he, this deponent, went out of town to *Twickenham*, and returned to town the next day between 9 and 10 o'clock at night. That upon his return to town, William Corrie, the ostler of the livery stables where his master's horses stand, delivered to him a note or letter; and that *this deponent hath looked at the note or letter * now produced* and shewn to him at the time of swearing this his affidavit, marked with the letter (B). And this deponent saith, that he believes the same is the note which was so delivered to him by the said William Corrie as aforesaid. And this deponent saith, that he carried the letter which Miss Gunning had given him as aforesaid, and which she had directed him to deliver to General Gunning, to his master's, General Gunning's house. That his master was not at home, but that this deponent delivered it to Thomas Walkis, his master's valet. And this deponent saith, that the day before his master found it out, that is, before his

* Copy of the note or letter B.

" William, you must tell papa, when you give him the Duke's letter, that his Grace sent his compliments, and that he would return the papers when he had done with them."

On the outside, " For William."

master

master had discovered that this deponent had not been at the Duke of Marlborough's, Miss Gunning overtook this deponent in Piccadilly in her father's carriage; and that she called him to the door of the carriage, and said to him, you must stand to it, and if you are called upon, you must say you will take your oath of it, or used words to that or the like effect. And this deponent saith, he understood Miss Gunning to mean by such words as aforesaid, that if this deponent was asked about the letter which he delivered to General Gunning's valet as aforesaid, he, this deponent, should say that he received that letter from the Duke of Marlborough. And this deponent says, that John Dean, footman to General Gunning, was behind the carriage at the time above mentioned; and that the said John mentioned to him after he came home, that he had heard what Miss Gunning said to him, this deponent, from the carriage. And that the said John Dean told this deponent, that he, John, had afterwards stopped the carriage and spoke to Miss Gunning about the matter. And that the said John Dean told this deponent, that he, John, might be brought into as great premunire as this deponent; that he expected it, and looked for it; that this deponent understands John to have meant something about a note which Miss Gunning had sent by John to Mrs. Bowen, and that he so understands, from a conversation which he afterwards had with some of the servants of General Gunning. And this deponent saith, that he has
never

never seen Miss Gunning since she left her father's house; but that in the course of last week, Hannah Hales, whom this deponent believes is the servant of Miss Gunning, came to General Gunning's house between 6 and 7 o'clock in the evening, and said she wanted to speak with this deponent, and that she pulled a paper out of her pocket which she said Miss Gunning desired her to give to this deponent to read; and that this deponent read the same two or three times, and that to the best of this deponent's recollection the contents of the paper were, that if this deponent would take his oath that he had not delivered the papers which had been delivered to him by General Gunning, as before is mentioned, to Miss Gunning, that she would settle twenty pounds a year on him for life, and that he might go to Wales, or where he pleased, and that she would pay him quarterly: That this deponent told the said Hannah Hales he would not do any such thing for all the world, and desired her to tell Miss Gunning that he would do no such thing; and Hannah Hales then said to this deponent, that she had before told her mistress so. And this deponent saith, that when he had read the paper, which he did two or three times, he returned it to Hannah Hales, who refused to let this deponent keep the same, and said she was ordered not. And this deponent saith, he believes that the paper shewn to him by Hannah Hales was Miss Gunning's hand writing, he this deponent having often seen her

her hand-writing ; but that it appeared to this deponent to have been written fast. And this deponent saith, that he never was at Captain Bowen's house, and that he does not know Mr. or Mrs. Bowen if he was to see them, and that he does not know where Captain Bowen lives.

WILLIAM PEARCE.

Sworn at my house
in Lincolns-Inn
Fields this 21st
day of February,
1791,

Before me,
JOHN ORD.

AFFIDAVIT

AFFIDAVIT OF ISAAC CLEMMITT, WILLIAM CORRIE, AND JOSEPH HILL.

ISAAC CLEMMITT, of the White Bear Inn, Piccadilly, stable-keeper; William Corrie, head ostler; and Joseph Hill, under ostler to the said Isaac Clemmitt, each speaking for himself, severally make oath and say; and first, this deponent, Isaac Clemmitt, for himself, saith, that he this deponent being riding on horseback in Piccadilly, he was called to by Miss Gunning, who was then in her father, General Gunning's, coach, nearly opposite St. James's church; that Miss Gunning gave to this deponent a note, or letter, and desired he would deliver the same to William (meaning, as this deponent understood, General Gunning's groom) before he went to his master, General Gunning's. And *this deponent saith, that he verily believes that the note or letter now produced, and shewn to him at the time of swearing this his affidavit marked (B) *, is the same note or letter that Miss Gunning so delivered to him this deponent.* And this deponent saith, that he this deponent returned home with the note, and delivered it to the other deponent, Joseph Hill, who is under ostler to this deponent, and desired him to be very particular, and on no consideration to omit delivering the same to General Gunning's groom mean-

* The note or letter referred to in the groom's affidavit.—
See page 33.

ing the servant who was out with General Gunning's horse). And this deponent saith, that the said note or letter was delivered to this deponent by Miss Gunning on *Friday* the fourth day of February instant; and that he is the more certain as to the day, as it appears from his books that the General's horse was booked out on the third—and booked in on the fourth of February instant; and this deponent saith, that he knows Miss Gunning's person perfectly well. And this deponent, Joseph Hill, for himself, saith, that he well remembers that his master, the said Isaac Clemmitt, gave him a note or letter in the afternoon a few hours before William, General Gunning's groom, came home; that this deponent put the said note or letter into his pocket, and afterwards told the other deponent, William Corrie, the head offler, that he had a note for William, General Gunning's groom. And this deponent, Joseph Hill, further saith, that when William, General Gunning's groom, came home, this deponent being then at supper, his fellow servant, the other deponent, William Corrie, came to this deponent and asked him for the note, which this deponent gave to him, and says, *he verily believes the note or letter now produced to this deponent, at the time of swearing this his affidavit marked (B), is the same note or letter that was delivered to this deponent, and by him given to the said other deponent, William Corrie, as aforesaid.* And this deponent, William Corrie, for himself, saith, that the other deponent, Joseph Hill, did, on the fourth day of February instant, inform this

this deponent, that he had a note for William, General Gunning's groom, which he had received from his master, meaning the said Isaac Clemmitt : That on the said groom's return this deponent went into the kitchen to the said Joseph Hill, and asked him for the note, which the said Joseph Hill delivered to this deponent ; and that this deponent took it down to the stable, and gave it to General Gunning's said groom ; that there was a direction on the note for William.

And this deponent believes that the note or letter now produced, and shewn to him at the time of swearing this his affidavit, marked with the letter (B), is the same note or letter which was delivered to this deponent, and by him given to the said groom as aforesaid.

All sworn at my
house in Lin-
coln's Inn Fields
this twenty-first
day of February
1791, before me,

ISAAC CLEMMITT,
WILLIAM CORRIE,
JOSEPH HILL.

JOHN ORD.

T H E E N D.

deponent that he had a note for William
Gunning's room, which he had re-
ceived from his master, saying the said
deponent: That on the said day, in the
deponent went into the kitchen to the said
Hill, and asked him for the note, which the said
Joseph Hill delivered to the deponent; and that
this deponent took it down to the said room, and
gave it to General Gunning's said room; that
there was a question on the note as to the
deponent's belief that the note was from
himself, and thereby at the time of the
ing this is added with the letter (B) in
the same note or
deponent, and by the said room as
deponent.



All written in my
house in Lin-
coln's Inn Fields
this twenty-first
day of February
1857.

John Doe